



For Immediate Release

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The 4th Annual Art of Surviving Showcases the Creativity of the Global Brain Tumor Community During Brain Tumor Awareness Month

Ocean City, MD — The Raymond A. Wood Foundation (RAWF) is hosting the fourth year of “Art of Surviving,” a virtual art exhibition that celebrates the creativity of the brain tumor community during the month of May, which is Brain Tumor Awareness Month. Brain tumor patients and survivors, along with caregivers and family members from all over the world entries in all types of media, including photography, digital art, drawing, painting, printmaking, 3-D, multimedia, and creative writing.

Founded in 2017, the Raymond A. Wood Foundation helps improve quality of life for hypothalamic-pituitary brain tumor survivors by providing access to education, technology, and evolving treatments.

Many brain tumor survivors use art as a way to cope with the challenges that come with treatment, a means to calm and focus a healing brain, or an opportunity to express their experiences. Some survivors struggle with typical recreational activities due to the medical implications and long-term comorbidities that come with treatments of certain tumor types, leading them to art as an activity that they can do independently or with family members.

The idea of this yearly art show came when RAWF’s executive director, Amy Wood, saw that her son, treated for a brain tumor at age 4, continually gravitated toward drawing and coloring above all other activities.

“He had never really been interested in art prior to his tumor treatment, and then suddenly coloring and drawing were his go-to,” said Wood. “He really seemed to use it as an outlet in times where he clearly needed a break from outside stimulation.”

Wood noticed artists emerging among brain tumor groups she participated in online, so she asked a colleague, Olive Mawyer, now the show’s coordinator, to help her pull together an art exhibition for the month of May.

“I thought providing a platform for sharing artwork would be a positive thing for the foundation to do during Brain Tumor Awareness Month,” said Wood. “I didn’t know how it would go, but I figured we would build it and see if people would be interested in participating.”

The first Art of Surviving was launched in May of 2018 with about 10 participants and has grown steadily. This year, there are 71 entries on display, with over 30 participants from all over the world.

The artwork is judged by a panel of professional artists in all genres who review and score the work and winners receive cash prizes. There is also a People's Choice Award, where citizen judges can cast votes for the submissions that speak to them.

"There are some beautiful and moving expressions through art and writing in the show this year along with some truly inspiring stories of survival," said Mawyer. "We hope people will take time to explore the gallery and learn more about the experiences of survivors and their caregivers and family members."

Artwork, creative writing, and even a music video is on display at www.artofsurviving.gallery. The public is invited to view the work and vote on their favorites. Voting ends on May 29, and winners will be announced on May 30.

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Photo Caption:

According to her artist's statement, *The Face of Beauty*, a mixed media portrait by Samaya Glazier-Bae "this art means when you are being yourself, you show beauty." Samaya is a 9.5 year old brain tumor survivor, diagnosed at age 8 when she became nearly blind and could not see color. She is grateful that after the surgery she was able to "get her art Spirit back" and see color again.